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LETTER FROM THE LORD DEPUTY, SIR ARTHUR CHICHESTER, TO THE EARL
OF NORTHAMPTON,*

From the Cottonian Collection. British Museum.

MY HONORABLE LORD,

Your lop's comfortable and kinde letters do geve life and spirett to my poore endeavours in his maties service, weh grace were a sufficient motive for me to goe on, and cheerfully to perform my deutie in the place I hoolde, this notwth standing your lop. is pleased to grace me further, and in extra-ordenarie fashion by publycke applaus and commendations. St Oliver Lambeart hath acquainted me wth some passages of your lop's discourse wth him concerninge me and how nobly you stande affected towards me, and gratusly inclyned to do me good and to advance my fortunes; this proceeds meerly from your lop's honorable disposition to geve each laborer more then his deue if he do his best, al-beyt others might perchance have done far better. I can never discharge the debt I owe unto you for so gratus acceptance of me into your good favoure, nor to that noble lord who did first recom-mende me unto you, but if the service of him whom you have made yours maye att anie tyme meet part of such aboundance it is truly devoted and shalbe readely employed att all occasions.

Your lop's extraordenarie care and paynes taken in all matters concerninge the kinges honore, and profit, and the generall good of the commonwealth hath fixed all good men's eyes upon you who geve therto all deue respect and commendations, for wthout such providence and watchfullness, the honore and expense of a state can not be supported, espeeally in that kingdome when it is suckt by two such hungrie weaklynges as Scotelande and Irelande, wherof the later had never yet strenth to support hyr selfe, weh I impute rather to the neglect that hath byne in former tymes in usinge the meanes and takinge the occasion weh hath often presented hit selfe for reformation in this kynde, then in the basenes and barrennes of the soyle and countrie, and therfore yt is to be hoped in this adge to see amendment, and if such a course be intended wee must followe the example of good husbandmen who undertakinge the manurance of a land weh hath long layne wast, and become a wyldernes over-growne with thornes and briers, doth first inhable hymselfe to cut downe and weede out those hinderers

* Henry Howard, Earl of Northampton, was a younger son of the talented and unfortunate Earl of Surrey.

"Who has not heard of Surrey's fame?
His was the hero's soul of fire,
And his the bard's immortal name."

Though of little note previous to the accession of James

I., Howard's genius for intrigue, and the misfortunes of his family, partly incurred by their adherence to Mary Queen of Scots, recommended him to the favour of the British Solomon, and he soon rose to rank, power, and fortune. His character, however, was never good, and he was deeply implicated in the mysterious murder of Sir Thomas Overbury, but died before the great Oyer of Poisoning.

of his profit, and is content for a few years to lay out his money to fence and preserve such plantations as he shall sett, and the seed he shall sow until it grow up, and return him the profits of his labours, when on the contrary we have hitherto suffered the weeds to overgrow the corn, and seldom took care to preserve the one, or root out the other until meer necessity enforced it for preservation of the whole, which brought with it such consumption of men and treasure that by the time it was reduced to peace little substance was left and less care was taken to repopulate, and plant it as after such a war was expedient, when it is probable if the tenth part of the money consumed in suppressing this last Rebellion had been expended in strengthening places of advantage and planting of good and honest subjects, that peace and plenty would follow, whereby the King might make profit of the kingdom, or at least be freed from the hazard of future expence which this omission is now like to draw upon us if it be not timely prevented, for hitherto we have but driven the noxious beasts out of the forest, and left all ways and passages open for them to reenter.

I know not what aid or supportation the fugitives^b shall receive from the Spaniard or Archduke, but the kind intreatment they have received compared with the multitude of petitions given to base and discontented men of this nation, makes them there, and their associates and well-wishers here to give out largely, and all wise and good subjects to conceive the worst. I am much wayes assured that Tyrone and Tyrconnell will returne if they live, albeit they should have no other assistance, nor supportation then a quantity of money, arms, and munition, with which they will be sufficiently enabled to kindle such a fire here (where so many hearts, and actors affect and attend alteration) as will take up much time with expence of men and treasure to quench it, I know your lord. in your wisdom doth foresee their myndes, and their means, and will have care to prevent the harme that is threatened, the best advice that I can give is to staye them from returning unto us, and the next to that is to enable us here with money to secure the principall townes, and to intreat in his Majesties pay such of this nation as will be of the one side, or other upon the first occasion that shall present it selfe. I have hitherto written to this effect, but can not remember it to often it being a matter of great Consequence for preservation of the whole, for being assured of the townes, and principall harbours we shall in time get more forces to assist us, if we be too weak at their first arrivall, and upon the revolt of the country (which is greatly doubted) and shall be able *to wearie and beat our adversaries in time howe many soever and by intreatyng the old soldiers, and others apt to serve of this nation before hande we shall greatly weaken the contrary part who expect their assistance.*^c Your lord's noble acceptance of my former letters emboldens me to impart my mynd playnly and in so large a discourse for which I beseech your lord. to excuse me.

And now I humbly pray your lord. to give me leave, (for that Charitie begins with herselfe) to put your lord. in minde of my particulare. It hath pleased you hitherto, to enter into consideration

^b Alluding to the Earls of Tyrone and Tyrconnell, who fled from Ireland on the festival of the Holy Cross (fourteenth of September) 1607.

^c All the words in italics are underlined in the original.

of my estate, and to how meane a fortune I shoulde be left when this great place, (wch is but tempore,) is transferred to an other, if I be not enhabled by some entartaynement, and honorable imployment in his Maties service. It pleased you at that tyme to recommend me for the Presidencie of Mounster amonge other your gracious remembrancies, that place is now wourthily bestowed upon a noble gentleman. I then made bolde to acquaint your lop. wth my desire for the Presidencie of Ulster, (if anie such government were erected,) wch I did more for the service I might ther do his Matie by reason of my knowledge and experience in the province, then for the profit I expected; the Earle's flight,^a (who indeavored to oppose all good government and reformation in those parts) hath since that tyme left the passage open for the settlement therof, and I well understande both from your lop. and my l. of Salisburie that the same is intended unto me, for wch your honorable favours I am much bounden. It can not be otherwise thought but this newe government wyll bringe wth hyt some increase of charge, as well in respect of the preparation that must be made to lodge the president and state in convenient manner, and in safetie; as for the intartaynement that must be geven to the president and other officers accordinge to the forme of Mounster. But I conceave this and a greater wylke rayzed out of the *landes and perquisetts of that provence* over and above that wch is att this tyme referred to his Matie, and to make it so I wyll not omitt tyme nor oportunitie. I will cause the next Easter Rents of the fugetives' landes to be collected, and if I maye therin receave allowance the same shalbe *imployed towards the buyldinge and fortefenge of some convenient place for the president to loge in either att Dungannon or Armagh*, of wch Armagh is the more commodious, but Dungannon the more convenient, *in respect of the name and opinion heelde of hit by the people of that countrie*. I have written to this effect to my l. of Salisburie, to whom and your lop. I do wholly ad-dresse myselfe both for supportation and directions. If the settlement of a President be thought disadvantageous, or disproptable for his Maties service by those that knowe more or looke further into the forme of government then myselfe, I must, out of my zeale to the reformation of that countrie, and good of the Kings's service, humbly praye that certayn *well chosen men be made governors or superintendants over the severall shyres*, and I shall rest satisfied wth anie imployment his Matie shalbe pleased to bestowe upon me.^a

^a The circumstances which led to the flight of the Northern Earls, and the subsequent confiscation of their estates, are shrouded in the dim obscurity ever attendant on the conflicting statements of religious animosity. It is clear, however, that whether the Earls were guilty of plotting against the King or not, the King and his rapacious counsellors were exceedingly anxious to seize the wide possessions of the Earls in Ulster. The *Annals of the Four Masters*, as translated by O'Donovan, after recording the embarkation of Tyrone and Tyrconnell with their families and friends at Swilly, says:—"this was a distinguished company; and it is certain that the sea has not borne and the wind has not wafted in modern times a number of persons in one ship more eminent, illustrious, or noble, in point of genealogy, heroic deeds, valour, feats of arms, and brave achievements, than they.

Would that God had but permitted them to remain in their patrimonial inheritances until their children should arrive at manhood! Woe to the heart that meditated, woe to the mind that conceived, woe to the council that recommended the project of this expedition, without knowing whether they should, to the end of their lives, be able to return to their native principalities or patrimonies!"—They ultimately died at Rome, and were buried in one grave, on

"The Mount whereon the Martyr-saint was crucified."

^a Lloyd in his *State Worthies*, London, 1670, speaking of Sir Arthur, says:—"he was high in his proposal beyond the expectation of his own. The devil brought the bashful man to court, where none succeeds but he who can ask enough to be granted and enough to be abated."

Sr Olevier Lambeart tells me your lop. is desirous to place a gentlemanun to whom you wysch well in some employment in this kingdome. I am hartely sorrie I had not understood yt sooner before these last companies were devided, when I shoulde have taken the opurtunity to do somethinge to your lop's lykinge, seeinge this tyme is lett slype not understandinge your lop's desire that waye, maye it please you to make me knowe the partie, I wyll take hoold of the first opportunitie to performe the same.

I humbly pray your lop. to excusse my longe letters, and so, with remembrance of my deutie,

I remayne your lop. in all treue and faithfull service.

ARTHUR CHICHESTER.

Att his Maties Castle of Dublyn, the 7th of Februarie, 1607.^f

Albeyt I write of the Presidencie of Ulster, it may please your lop. to understande that I expect no settlement therein untill some other be assigned to the place I now holde, or as your lop. shall thinke best for his Maties service.

[The superscription on the back of the letter in Sir Arthur's writing, is:—]

"To the Right Honorable my verie good lorde, the Earle of Northampton, one of his Maties most honorable privie Councell."

[The seal is in excellent preservation, has been evidently impressed by a signet ring, and represents on a shield the chequy and chief vair of Chichester; the first and fourth quarterings of the present arms of the Donegall family.]

W. P.

^f It may be necessary to observe for the benefit of the non-archæological reader—who will probably be surprised to find Sir Arthur, apparently, writing of the Earl's flight some months before it took place—that, from the fourteenth century till 1753, the civil, legal, and ecclesiastical year commenced on the 25th of March.

The historical year, however, has, for a very long period commenced, as the year of our present reformed calendar, on the first of January; consequently, historically and according to the modern computation, the date of the above letter is 1608.